

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, before line 5, amend the first inserted paragraph as follows:

This is a division of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/743,165 ~~filed January 5, 2001,~~
~~2001~~ with a 35 U.S.C. §371 date of April 19, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,680,086, the
specification of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Page 4, beginning on line 28, amend the paragraph as follows:

--PCT Patent publication No. ~~WO/96/237228~~ WO/96/23728 and Finnish Patent Application No. 964,365 describe a method for preparing extremely small and homogeneously sized PCC (Precipitated Calcium Carbonate) particles. In this method, PCC particles are formed from slaked lime CaO with the help of water and carbon dioxide in a direct gas-phase reaction, whereby extremely small particles are created with a diameter smaller than 100 nm, or even smaller than 20 nm. There is also described a method for coating particles of natural calcium carbonate with precipitated carbonate. Under suitable conditions, the prepared elementary particles floc into roundish aggregate particles of a cloudberry shape that have better rheological and optical properties than conventional PCC particles of needle-like shape. The size distribution of the flocced aggregate particles is very narrow and the flocced particles made using this technique are almost invariably smaller than 500 nm. The particles forming the aggregates are bonded to each other by van der Waals and capillary forces that become effective when the particles are disposed from each other at a distance smaller than 100 nm. On the other hand, the zeta-potential that characterizes the potential difference of the particle's ion field to the medium tends to separate the particles from agglomerating with each other. As the zeta-potential is strongly dependent on the pH of the particle, the formation and size of the aggregate particles can be affected by varying the degree of turbulence, or average mutual distance, and pH of the particles tending to aggregate together. If the degree of turbulence in the particle flow is sufficiently high, the elementary particles can be kept apart from each other. A more detailed description is given in the cited patent applications.